

SCIENCE & GOVERNMENT REPORT

The Independent Bulletin of Science Policy

Vol. IV, No. 1

P.O. Box 21123, Washington, D.C. 20009

Jan. 1, 1974

Dr. Grant Swinger's Forecast for 1974

The following predictions for the New Year were prepared by Dr. Grant Swinger, SGR consultant and director of the Center for the Absorption of Federal Funds.

January. President Nixon departs Washington for San Clemente by glider, citing saving of 85,000 gallons of jet fuel. Says he will "fully abide" by congressional tax committee decision on whether saving is tax deductible. FDA lifts ban on cyclamates, imposes ban on saccharine.

February. Administration says it is "optimistic" about energy crisis. Sierra Club files suit challenging national ban on walking faster than five miles an hour. Presidential glider becalmed in Ohio. HEW decrees that animals must be included on advisory boards reviewing experiments involving their species. FDA lifts ban on phosphate soap powders, imposes ban on enzyme products.

March. Administration says it is "pessimistic" about energy crisis. NIH adopts raffle system for awarding grants after OMB study shows no difference in quality or output between NIH-funded projects and rejected projects funded from other sources. FDA lifts ban on saccharine, imposes ban on cyclamates.

April. White House says technology is answer to energy crisis, announces plan for solar-powered plant to convert natural gas into oil. Groundbreaking delayed by environmental suit.

May. Presidential glider lands in Maine, where President Nixon, claiming progress in energy crisis, announces that Federal Energy Office will be renamed Federal Office for Energy and that henceforth the director will be known as the administrator. "Let no one doubt that we're doing everything possible," President asserts to cheering crowd as glider resumes journey to San Clemente.

June. White House "optimistic" about energy crisis. Citing grain shortage, President Nixon speaks to nation by radio while awaiting winds above Montreal, declaring, "We do not face a bread crisis; rather we face a bread challenge." Feeding pigeons banned on Sundays. National walking speed cut to four miles an hour. Honda announces plans for garbage-powered car. IBM markets manual conversion kit for electric typewriters.

July. Presidential glider blown back to Washington. Mr. Nixon says he will donate glider to Smithsonian Aeronautical Museum and will "fully abide" by congressional tax committee decision on whether gift is tax deductible. FDA lifts ban on enzyme soap products, imposes ban on phosphates.

August. Administration charges politics as Senator Kennedy, following report from his campaign pollsters, urges campaign against acid indigestion and loose dentures. President Ford says he will not be stampeded into upsetting national priorities for medical research. FDA lifts ban on cyclamates, imposes ban on saccharine.

September. Soviet Union agrees to supply US with wheat. Administration impounds all funds for energy research, pointing out that fiscal responsibility is basis for national prosperity. White House says it is "optimistic" about energy crisis. General Haig denounces National Environmental Policy Act as "in violation" of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. New process for collecting nutrients from metropolitan water supply enables New York City to cut deficit substantially.

October. Soviet and American astronauts rendezvous in space; carry out first orbital monkey head transplant. President says spinoff will "benefit all mankind." White House says it is "pessimistic" about energy crisis. FDA lifts ban on phosphates, imposes ban on enzymes.

November. Federal Office for Energy reorganized as National Commission for Energy Administration, to be headed by a commissioner rather than an administrator. Artichoke prices skyrocket following report Detroit is working on artichoke-powered car.

December. President announces candle ration will be increased for holiday season. Parole board agrees to hear Nixon appeal.—DSG

In Brief

Congress went home for the holidays without any resolution of how the planned boom in federal R&D energy programs is to be administered. The House passed overwhelmingly Nixon's proposal to establish an independent Energy Research and Development Administration that would draw together most energy programs. However, the Senate, led by Henry Jackson, has given its support to an interim measure that would leave most programs where they are, but would coordinate them under a central project manager system.

Harrison Brown's long tenure as Foreign Secretary of the National Academy of Sciences will end next spring as the result of his decision not to seek re-election. However, Brown's propensity for travel and scientific ceremonies will still be amply satisfied. He's in line for the presidency of the International Council for Scientific Unions.

Energy Crisis Not Likely to Create R&D Gravytrain

A lot of scientists and engineers are twitching with optimism that their professions' plummet from fiscal and advisory grace in Washington is in the process of being reversed by the Administration's avowed intent to boost research as one means to counter the energy crisis.

The difficulties with this cheering notion are: (1) the Administration's spending plans for energy R&D are so befogged by characteristic Nixonian flimflam that any research administrator would be daft to commit resources prior to the delivery of money; (2) even if the money is delivered, he would have to be even loonier to rely on the durability of the Administration's commitment—(doubters should check with the caretakers of the innumerable padlocked space science programs that were excitedly erected in NASA's heyday), and (3) the personal presence of science in Washington contains few, if any, candidates for the Hall of Fame, and such as they are, they are situated at such middling levels that their most reliable access to the White House is probably through the tourist gate.

As was detailed in SGR Vol. III, No. 22, a good deal of Nixon's proclaimed \$10-billion, five-year R&D drive toward energy "self sufficiency" is essentially a nuclear-dominated rehash of existing programs, unencumbered by any definition of what, after all, is meant by self-sufficiency. When all the numbers are tallied, it's the madcap pursuit of the trouble-ridden breeder reactor system that gets most of the money. Senator Jackson's \$20-billion, 10-year plan calls for an immense swelling of the energy R&D pie so that non-nuclear programs may thrive, while atomic energy research still proceeds at a well-financed pace. But even if Jackson's bill passes, it is plain that few things are harder to achieve than getting Nixon to spend money he doesn't want to spend.

A slew of court decisions have slapped Nixon hard on impoundment. But the White House, through the Office of Management and Budget, possesses an endless series of devices for retarding expenditures, as was evidenced last week when it was announced that a newly released \$1-billion worth of health and education funds would be slowly parcelled out over several years, despite a court order that seemed to direct prompt expenditure. And assuming that the Administration does deliver on its commitment to spending for energy R&D, there is still the question of where the money is to come from.

If the deftly misrepresented War on Cancer is a model, what must be recognized is that any loudly trumpeted boost for one program is inevitably accompanied by a silent withdrawal of funds from another. In the bizarre logic of Nixon-OMB planning, funds for cancer-labeled programs go up while funds for basic cell biology and general research training go down. Doubters are directed to the laments of Nixon's old crony, Benno C. Schmidt, chairman of the President's Cancer Panel, as reported in SGR Vol. III, No. 22. With federal expenditures now pressing the budget ceiling, and tax intake expected to go down as a result of anemia in-

vading the economy, there is no growth available to provide for expanded federal expenditures. What goes into energy research—if anything additional at all—will come out of the hide of ongoing programs, with hostile reaction on the part of partisans of those programs as inevitable as Nixon's next assurance that he plans soon to tell all about Watergate.

As for the durability of federal intent, Nixon floggers can take solace in evidence that he's worse than preceding presidential promisers, but the fact is that the US method of government isn't laid out for easily enduring the pains of the long haul. Cold War motivations have provided incredible staying power in the past, as evidenced by the Vietnam War and the decade-long mania to land on the moon, but otherwise the US system provides little incentive for mending the roof while the sun is shining. With budgetary pressures squeezing the federal enterprise right across the board, it is as safe as any guess can be that if the Arab nations ease their boycott for any significant length of time, OMB will conclude that energy research expenditures can be safely stretched out for a few fiscal years beyond the original plan.

Fusion power is a lovely idea, something on the order of perpetual motion, but in a political system that marches to biennial congressional and quadrennial presidential elections, what's the difference whether fusion arrives in year 1998 or 2016? As for research concerning solar, geothermal, and

(Continued on page 3.)

Nixon Hints More Spending

President Nixon has reportedly told Congressional leaders he is willing to boost the pace of federal spending on energy R&D above his previously stated target of \$10 billion over the next five years.

That word comes from Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott (R-Pa.) and House Minority Leader John Rhodes (R-Ariz.), who met recently with the President. The two Republican leaders said they had discussed the possibility of spending the \$10 billion in three years rather than five, and that Nixon had agreed that a speedup may be desirable to attain self-sufficiency in energy.

If such an acceleration in proposed energy research occurs, the Administration's program would become more ambitious than the various research proposals now bubbling through Congress. But skeptical congressmen are waiting to see how much money the Administration actually requests when it submits its fiscal 1975 budget proposals late this month. There are some reports circulating on Capitol Hill that the Office of Management and Budget is considering a reduction, rather than an increase, in the spending contemplated under the original \$10-billion, five-year plan.

Metal-Bending Mind Agrees to New Tests

Uri Geller, the "psychokinetic" Israeli who has been wowing audiences around the world, including some American scientific groups, with his alleged ability to bend and even break metal objects without touching them, has accepted a challenge from Britain's *New Scientist* magazine to subject his talents to examination by a diverse panel of specialists.

Having already performed persuasively on TV and before a group of scientists drawn from the Stanford Research Institute, Geller has now agreed to do his thing under the scrutiny of a member of Britain's Society for Psychical Research, a biologist and physicist from *New Scientist's* staff, a research psychologist, a professional magician, and a newspaper journalist.

No date has been set, but Geller responded affirmatively to the invitation and said that he expected to in London for the test "in the near future."

The only sour note to these extraordinary proceedings was sounded by *New Scientist* columnist Donald Gould, who suggested that Geller apply his metal-bending mind to the barrels of Arab artillery.

ENERGY (Continued from page 2.)

wind power, coal gasification, shale conversion and other offbeat sources of energy, there's a good deal of public drumbeating by champions of these technologies, and, occasionally, attendant assertions of vast interest on the part of one or another federal agency. But the amount of money so far committed remains trifling, and the reliability of longterm spending promises is questionable. Not too long ago, it may be recalled, the US government committed itself to a war on poverty, foreign aid, educational research, and an anti-tobacco campaign. They're all still present in the federal inventory, but in most cases, barely so, as the result of shifting political fashions.

The impression that scientific influence is streaming back into Washington via the energy route is simply another instance of the community's capacity for self-flattering political delusion. To assess the realities it is useful to go back to the days when scientific influence really streamed into Washington, namely at the end of World War II, when Truman and company desperately needed sophisticated technical guidance on the mysteries of atomic weaponry, and again after Sputnik, when the Eisenhower administration needed scientific help. In both instances, they installed high-quality scientific expertise in or close to the White House, and they used that expertise for brush-fire purposes and also for long-term planning.

However, the difference between those two episodes and what is now happening under Nixon is striking. It was Nixon who, following his re-election,

wiped out 20 years of scientific presence at the White House level by abolishing the Office of Science and Technology. Only as an afterthought did he transfer some of OST's duties to the director of the National Science Foundation, and only as a further afterthought did he designate the director to serve as presidential science adviser, when called upon. The tipoff as to where this advisory function stands in Nixonian thinking is to be found in the fact that when the White House wanted a big energy research program cooked up, it assigned the task to the chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, Dixy Lee Ray, a colorful lady, and perhaps the most entertaining public character on the Washington scene after Kissinger and Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz, but, with all credit to Ms. Ray and her well-publicized dogs and mobile home residence, she's got little if any constituency in the scientific community, and Washington bureaucrats do not tremble at the mention of her name. When Nixon realized that the energy situation had devolved into a critical mess, he didn't turn to scientific competence to seek a way out; rather, he hired a sensationally successful Wall Street gambler, William Simon, to head up the Federal Energy Office. R&D makes nice window dressing and, no doubt, it will solve many of the shortages over the long haul, but the formula for here and now is some fuel conservation coupled with a serious effort to buy our way out of the crisis through higher prices, elimination of import quotas, and bigger profits for the firms that provide energy. That strategy provides no meat for C. P. Snow-type dramas about science and government.

Furthermore, apart from the strategy, the remaining members of the cast of characters on the Washington science scene do not overflow with charisma or influence. The chief of NASA, James C. Fletcher, is deliberately so invisible that he might be gone for a month before his absence would be noted. NSF Director H. Guyford Stever, the nominal science adviser to the President, is a modest man who takes a modest view of his role and is yet to be accused of aggressiveness on any issue. It is quite possible that he has privately seen the President on some issue or other, but then again it is more likely that he has not. Stever says that his route to the White House is through Treasury Secretary George Shultz, but since the Watergate debacle and the decline of the economy, it is doubtful that Shultz has much time for the esoterics of science policy affairs.

Philip Handler, president of the National Academy of Sciences, is possessed of grandiose notions concerning the wonders that science might perform for this country. But a friend of his recently recalled Handler lamenting that "at least five times a day there are things I want to talk to the White House about, but there's no one there to talk to anyone."

The thought that the energy crisis will turn out to be the occasion for bringing science and government back into their old relationship is an agreeable one for many people. But it just isn't happening. DSG

Energy Debate Reveals Battle Over Patent Rights

The Nixon Administration is in sharp disagreement with its own Justice Department over Administration efforts to allow private contractors to obtain exclusive patent rights to inventions that arise out of federally funded R&D projects.

The dispute has been percolating behind the scenes for many months now, but it finally broke into public view during debate over various energy bills in December.

One focus of debate was Sen. Henry Jackson's \$20-billion, 10-year National Energy Research and Development Act of 1973, which contained a Section 112 pertaining to patent policy. As originally worded, that section provided that "the disposition of patent rights in inventions or discoveries arising out of research under this Act shall be governed by the President's Statement of Government Patent Policy issued on August 23, 1971 . . . and amended in September 1973 (by a set of proposed patent regulations issued Sept. 4, 1973)."

The thrust of those 1971 and 1973 documents was to liberalize the allocation of patent rights emerging from government contracts, thus making it easier for private parties to obtain exclusive rights to inventions from government-sponsored research.

But when Jackson's energy bill reached the floor of the Senate, the patent provision was successfully amended by Senators Philip Hart (D-Mich.), chairman of the Senate Antitrust Subcommittee, and Russell Long (D-La.), a long-time opponent of

exclusive licenses from government contracts. Their amendment forbade exclusive licenses and provided that patents and know-how arising from the \$20-billion energy program must be made available to all qualified applicants on nonexclusive and nondiscriminatory terms.

Asserting that he sought to assure that any research breakthroughs "are not fenced off" from widespread use, Hart stated: "When public funds are used to finance in whole or in part research and development underlying an invention, simple fairness demands that its utilization and benefits be available to all on nonexclusive equal terms. It would be manifestly unfair to allow an important patent to be licensed to General Motors, for example, on an exclusive basis, thereby excluding the use of that patent by Ford, Chrysler, and American Motors. Similarly, no justification can exist for granting an exclusive license to Exxon, for example, and excluding the rest of the energy industry from the patent."

Hart and Long later inserted a similar amendment into the National Fuels and Energy Conservation Act of 1973, which passed the Senate on Dec. 10, three days after the Jackson energy R&D bill was approved by the same body.

Strong opposition to these amendments was expressed by the Commerce Department, which said it

(Continued on page 5.)

OTA Director Considering Short-term Staff Posts

Emilio Q. Daddario, director of the newly established congressional Office of Technology Assessment, holds hopes that OTA, in addition to its principal function of serving the Congress, can also help spread the gospel of technology assessment around the country.

In an interview with SGR, Daddario noted that the law creating OTA endowed it with considerable operational flexibility, and he is considering a series of short-term appointments that would allow specialists of various types to work with the permanent OTA staff. The appointments, he said, could be for a year or so, depending on the individual's own schedule and OTA's speciality requirements. Daddario's deputy, Daniel V. De Simone, offered the thought that OTA could serve "as sort of a West Point for technology assessment."

As things now stand, the OTA operation is moving along with a good deal of caution. Daddario said that, with a few exceptions, the professional staff will not be hired until he develops a fairly clear picture of the problems that Congress wants examined. For this purpose, he has been making the rounds of committee

chairmen and their staff assistants, and is in the process of working out a list of priorities. As a former congressman himself, Daddario is acutely sensitive to the jurisdictional jealousies that prevail on Capitol Hill, and he is determined to avoid the danger of intruding OTA in areas where it is not wanted. The problem, of course, is that the most urgent issues generally evoke protective stances on the part of congressional committees. But like all the faithful of technology assessment, Daddario is convinced that a skillfully performed study will command attention, no matter whom it offends. He notes, for example, that the current flood of oratory and writings concerning the energy situation is accompanied by relatively little agreement about basic statistics on reserves, production, consumption and costs. It would help everybody, he says, if the numbers were laid out in a reliable fashion.

As for when OTA will be out with its first study, Daddario says he doesn't have any idea, and that, furthermore, he feels no pressure to justify the office's existence with a swift delivery. "We'll take our time and do it right," he said.

UK Science-Society Council Lists Topics for Study

Britain's newly established and prestigious Council for Science and Society, consisting of 34 persons drawn from the upper echelons of science, education, and public affairs, has announced the selection of six subjects for investigation. They are:

Balancing "acceptable" risk from pollution against anticipated benefits of new technology; control of individual behavior by medical and psychological means; problems involved in the use of "harmless" weapons for control of civil disorder; the information explosion; non-clinical use of mood-control drugs, and monitoring technology where expertise is closely held.

The Council, a privately organized and supported organization, is an oddball affair among national entities in handwringing over science and society. Clearly "establishment" in its makeup, it is headed by an internationally renowned critic of orthodox science, Jerome Ravetz, of Leeds University, a former Marxist who recently became a disciple of Divine Light.

Ravetz, who has announced his intention to bail out if the operation turns out to be merely another conservative foray into the subject matter, says abundant literature exists on most of the subjects, and that the object will be to have working parties conduct literature searches and produce 15,000-word reports that, among other things, will be comprehensible to the lay public.

Ravetz can be contracted at Leeds University, Leeds, England.

PATENTS (Continued from page 4.)

was presenting the Administration's position. Commerce objected that section 112 would authorize the government, operating through the courts, to require that patents be licensed to qualified applicants, a circumstance which Commerce claimed "could perhaps diminish the incentives provided by our patent system to invent in the energy field." As commerce viewed it: "The protection to intellectual property which patents afford has been a key element in fostering and encouraging innovation."

Commerce also objected that a requirement for non-exclusive licensing "could hinder the commercial utilization of inventions in those cases where exclusive rights may be necessary." And it objected to requirements that contractors make available certain background patents, trade secrets and proprietary information because this "might substantially reduce the cooperation of those companies having the greatest background positions."

But Hart's amendment was supported by the Justice Department, which argued in a Dec. 10 letter to Sen. Jackson that, "Since the purpose of the Act is to bring forth new energy technology that will be of general use to the economy, it would appear highly

desirable that all those conducting energy research should have full and unhindered access to the work being carried out under the Act, so that all researchers will be able to build upon, further improve, and fully utilize the latest advances in the art."

Taking issue with the notion that a failure to grant patent rights to contractors would hinder commercial utilization of inventions, Justice found it "most unlikely" that inventions would lie around unexploited "given the present financial incentives to such exploitation."

As for the availability of background technology, Justice commented: "It would appear that, if the government has for the benefit of the public financed a significant improvement in energy technology, then it would not be proper or fair for the contractor to be able to block the public from utilizing the fruits of that public investment through the control of background technology."

In some cases, Justice suggested, a private patent holder might seek to maximize profits by restricting production of energy-related technology, a course of action which would undermine the energy bill, which seeks to maximize output of energy technology. "There may thus be a conflict between the purposes and objectives of the legislation and the most rational economic behavior of a monopolist," Justice argued.

Perhaps the most significant argument made by Justice was that the patent regulations proposed by the Administration on Sept. 4 could result in "an unconstitutional disposition of government property" because the Executive branch is not allowed to relinquish government property (such as patent rights) without Congressional authorization. Justice claimed its position was not inconsistent with the President's very general 1971 policy statement on patents, but it called for changes in the proposed Sept. 4, regulations, which are scheduled to go into effect March 4, after a period for comment and revision.

The dispute between Justice and the Administration over the energy bills reflects a broader disagreement over patent policy in general. Commerce and a subcommittee of the Federal Council for Science and Technology have been pushing for liberalization of the rules governing allocation of patent rights while Justice has been cautious about giving away such rights. At present there is no government-wide policy. Some agencies, such as the Defense Department, often assign patent rights to a contractor at the time an R&D contract is signed. Others, such as the Atomic Energy Commission, generally require non-exclusive licensing of inventions made with their funds.

10-Year NAS Earthquake Study: Chief Finds Faults

Nine years, eight volumes, and three quarters of a million dollars after it began, the National Academy of Science's study group on the 1964 Alaska earthquake has issued its final report, along with an essay by the project leader suggesting that the mammoth scientific review was ill-conceived and should not be repeated for future quakes.

The study, which was conducted at the request of the now defunct White House Office of Science and Technology, was launched in 1964, some ten weeks after the quake took place, and was originally expected to require no more than three years of effort. But a series of problems, ranging from the inherent difficulty of the task to organizational snafus, conspired to delay completion for almost a decade, long after the quake had faded from the memories of the public and government bodies.

"In any rational view, it seems incredible that a disaster report in this day of speed and efficiency should require for completion nearly a decade following the event," acknowledges Stanford geochemist Konrad B. Krauskopf, who chaired the Academy's Committee on the Alaska Earthquake (CAE) for the entire project. "... To an outsider, either within the Academy or in government agencies, the sum total of the delays seemed preposterous."

The story of the problems that caused those delays is told in a soul-searching essay by Krauskopf that was published, despite some misgivings at the Academy, as part of the final volume. The essay provides unusual insight into the limitations of a part-time advisory apparatus, such as is operated by the Academy, and it offers some lessons for the handling of technical information from future major disasters.

The charge to the Academy committee was threefold: to survey the work already in progress on the earthquake, to identify and help fill gaps in the information being sought, and to compile a comprehensive report on the quake and its consequences. On the first two tasks, Krauskopf believes the committee "fulfilled its mission with fair success and reasonable dispatch. By a year after the earthquake occurred, the Committee could be confident that most of the essential information about the catastrophe was being carefully studied and that its own efforts were in some measure responsible for the completeness of coverage."

But on the third task, the comprehensive report, there were major problems. To begin with, the project was slow in getting started because of behind-the-scenes wrangling between the Academy and OST over how large a budget and panel structure would be necessary.

Then there was uncertainty about what form the report should take. Ultimately, the Academy decided to compile a truly comprehensive report that would include substantial parts of reports prepared by other government agencies. But this made it necessary to wait until the agency reports were finished.

Structural problems were another headache. As Krauskopf describes it: "Neither the panel chairmen nor the CAE chairmen had even rudimentary authority over panel members or other authors. Most authors were not paid for their work, in conformity with NAS practice; there was only the assurance that a manuscript would eventually appear in print. Each volume could progress only at a rate set by its slowest contributor, and chairmen had no weapons except wheedling and cajolery to speed completion of manuscripts."

The lack of an adequate editorial and review mechanism, at least in the early stages of the project, also caused delays. The committee assumed that the panels would do much of their own editorial work, criticizing one another's papers and reconciling discrepancies, while the panel members assumed the committee staff would do such polishing. Concludes Krauskopf: "For preparing a committee report of this size, written by men who can expect neither monetary nor promotional reward, an established editorial group is essential."

As the years wore on, there were further delays from "the human tendency to procrastinate on reports that seemed less and less urgent as the earthquake receded into the past." And gradually a financial crisis developed. The original three-year budget had been \$250,000, and agencies were generous in adding to that total, but when completion of the report seemed indefinitely delayed they "became understandably reluctant to make further contributions" and the CAE "became, in effect, a beggar, trudging hat in hand from one agency to another, and on a few occasions in its later history there was serious question whether the work would continue at all." Ultimately a dozen agencies contributed some \$660,000, and NSF supplied an additional \$100,000 on a loan-subsidy arrangement to help finance publication. But Krauskopf believes that "society will never reap maximum benefit from the study of disasters unless a less haphazard way of funding studies is established."

Was the final product worth all that effort? Krauskopf believes that "the completed volumes stand as a truly comprehensive account of the data acquired and the lessons learned from a major disaster. Never before has an earthquake been so fully reported." But he acknowledges that it is "difficult to disentangle" the work stimulated by the committee from work that was being done anyway. Rephrasing the question, Krauskopf asks whether, if San Francisco were devastated by another earthquake, a new CAE should be set up to compile a comprehensive report. His answer is "an unequivocal 'no.'" There are enough responsible agencies, he believes, to ensure that coverage of the quake would be adequate, and while a series of separate studies might be less accessible than a comprehensive report, modern library facilities would ease that burden.

Separate Research Institute Proposed for Congress

A small group of academics and policy analysts is quietly attempting to launch a foundation-financed institute that would enable Congress to draw upon the expertise of the nation's research community.

The group, which is spearheaded by Alton Frye, a liberal Republican who formerly served as administrative assistance to Sen. Edward Brooke (R-Mass.), includes two prominent figures from the scientific community—former MIT President James F. Killian, Jr., who served as science adviser to President Eisenhower, and Dartmouth College Professor Gordon J. F. MacDonald, a former member of the federal Council on Environmental Quality, who currently heads the National Academy of Sciences' Commission on Natural Resources.

Other prominent members of the informal group include Cyrus R. Vance, former deputy secretary of Defense; Harry McPherson, former counsel to President Johnson; and Murray L. Weidenbaum, former assistant secretary of the Treasury and currently a professor of economics at Washington University, St. Louis.

A basic premise of the group, according to Frye, is that "the intellectual community is heavily oriented toward providing support for the executive branch of government," while "the bar, schools of law, and the legal journals represent major intellectual resources for the judicial branch of government," yet there is "no private organization or body of experts distinctly aligned with the Congress as an institution."

To remedy this defect, the Frye group proposes the creation of a private institute that would work exclusively for Congress and would perform "systematic analysis of long-term policy problems." The institute would have a broad mandate to study just about anything, but Frye expects that the initial priorities would be national security, environmental policy issues, health policy, and the social and economic implications of new technologies, in that order.

The proposed organization—tentatively called The Institute for Congress—would complement, but differ from, existing sources of policy advice. Unlike the National Academy of Sciences, which is oriented toward the Executive branch and conducts its studies through part-time advisory committees, the new institute would work exclusively for Congress and would rely heavily on its own staff to do the work. And unlike the Congressional Research Service, the General Accounting Office, and the new Office of Technology Assessment, which are public bodies directly responsible to Congress, the new institute would be a private organization capable of taking a more "independent" look at problems. It would also offer an attractive work environment to those experts who prefer working in a non-political setting.

As envisioned by Frye, the institute would build up an interdisciplinary staff of perhaps 80

professionals by drawing on talent from the academic and research communities individuals "with executive branch experience and current knowledge of pending problems," and congressional staff "who demonstrate a capacity for objective policy analysis." It would also provide a basis for "prominent scholars and analysts from the private community who might take up residence for various special studies and consultations."

Thus far the institute is little more than an idea seeking supporters. But it has already earned the enmity of the conservative publication *Human Events*, which described the proposed institute as "still another liberal pressure group" that would supply Congress with "left-of-center research on items from disarmament to ecology."

To get off the ground, the institute will need the support of Congressional leaders and a healthy chunk of foundation money—about \$22.5 million for a five-year experimental operation, after which the institute would presumably either have demonstrated its worth, and be able to survive on congressional contracts, or it would have failed miserably and therefore go out of existence.

Frye reports that he has presented his plan to House and Senate leaders and has received encouragement ranging from cordial to enthusiastic, but the depth of that commitment remains to be tested. Frye says he has also gotten "affirmative" readings from foundation executives, but the plan is so expensive it would need support from a coalition of foundations, and no one has yet guaranteed to put up a share of the money.

Frye, who is currently a fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, has a small foundation commitment to support part of his time and travel while he tries to organize a board and develop links with Congress and the foundations in an effort to get the institute started. He plans to spend much of the coming year in that effort.

Science & Government Report
Kalorama Station
Box 21123B
Washington, D.C. 20009

☐ Renew my subscription

☐ Enter my subscription

for one year, \$44 ☐ ; two years, \$80 ☐
(Overseas airmail, \$10 additional per year.)

☐ check enclosed; ☐ please bill.

☐ Send a complimentary copy to:

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Zip _____

NIH Training Grants Get Major Boost in Funding

The beleaguered training grant and fellowship programs of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will receive a major infusion of funds as a result of two White House actions announced Dec. 19.

The training programs had originally been marked for extinction when the Administration proposed in January 1973 to make no new training awards and to phase the programs out entirely as soon as all current recipients had completed their training.

The rationale for that action was that the nation already had enough biomedical researchers (especially since health research budgets were also being reduced) and that biomedical students should be made to pay their own way since they could expect to make a good living as a result of their training.

However, the Administration's resolve weakened under a barrage of criticism from Congress and from the scientific community, accompanied by lawsuits that challenged the Administration's right to impound funds appropriated by Congress for specific purposes. Last July, the Administration decided to reinstate a biomedical fellowship program albeit one much smaller than the training programs that were being phased out. And on Dec. 19 the Administration capitulated still further when President Nixon agreed to release some \$1.1 billion in health and education funds that had been impounded from the fiscal 1973 budget and also signed a fiscal 1974 appropriations bill for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare that provided far more training funds than he had originally wanted to spend.

The precise sums that will be available for biomedical training are difficult to determine. But in very rough figures, the President's decision to give up the effort to impound fiscal 1973 funds will release about \$30-35 million for training purposes, while the fiscal 1974 appropriations bill which the

President signed on Dec. 19 will provide some \$170-180 million for biomedical training, considerably more than the \$130 million proposed in the President's original budget request for 1974.

Thus there will clearly be a substantial boost in training money, though the confusions arising from two years of impoundments, vetoed appropriations bills, multiple lawsuits and legislative compromises make it difficult to define the situation precisely. "We really don't know what will happen," one NIH official told SGR. "The last few days have been pretty confusing."

Letter to the Editor

With regard to your comments in the December 1, 1973, issue of *Science & Government Report*, entitled "Once Again, A Call to Reorganize Scientific Advice," I couldn't agree with you more — except for one aspect: I did not once mention "advice" in my November 26 editorial in *Chemical & Engineering News*. After all, a Cabinet post is something more than advisory.

The recommendation that "a focal point for technology in government" be created to "deal with civilian problems" was not meant to suggest a new advisory mechanism; it was meant as a call for action!

Again, when I wrote that "good government now requires experienced technological leadership," I was thinking of technologists as leaders — not as advisors. I do not believe this concept is just a reiteration of old saws, as you seem to imply.

Yours sincerely,
Robert W. Cairns
Executive Director
American Chemical Society

Science & Government Report
Kalorama Station
Box 21123
Section B
Washington, D.C. 20009

Second class postage paid
at Washington, D.C.

NEWSLETTER—

Please expedite delivery directly to addressee

